

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Larry Hartzke  
Department of Health and Family Services

FROM: Chrisann Lemery, RHIA  
HFS 117 Advisory Committee member

RE: Answers to Questions and other Information

### **What are the types of medical record media?**

Patient health care records are stored in a variety of formats: paper (including continuous readouts such as EKG strips, small print copies layered/shingled on a piece of paper, tri-fold documents, and paper sheets less than the standard 8.5 x 11), electronic in a variety of software versions, microfilm, and x-rays.

Your memo refers to microfiche. However, most settings have replaced microfiche with microfilm. Records on microfilm are much more costly to reproduce. A microfilm reader/printer is necessary which is extremely expensive and most hospitals only have one of these reader/printers onsite. It is a labor-intensive process to copy from microfilm as an individual has to identify the roll and then find the record and pertinent documents, which can take hours.

### **Does/should the medical care provider setting(hospital, clinic, etc.) or subject patient group(child, adult, etc.) matter with respect to the time and effort needed to reproduce records?**

The group of patients is not as pertinent as the diagnoses and the episodes of service, medical and psychological testing, and length of stay for a particular individual in a health care facility.

It is more difficult to produce records from a hospital or nursing home than from a general physician's office. Hospitals store many records off-site(in another building and/or in a storage facility operated by another business). Storage of records in an off-site facility is more costly to secure a record and many times a fee is charged to the facility to access the record from the off-site business.

### **What are the steps involved in reproducing medical records and how are those steps different for different record media and record maintainer settings?**

Attached is a document outlining the steps for reproducing a medical record.

#### **Existing fees.**

The AHIMA website has information for 1999 rates. The copy service companies should have more up to date information.

[http://library.ahima.org/xpedio/groups/public/documents/ahima/pub\\_bok1\\_000052.html](http://library.ahima.org/xpedio/groups/public/documents/ahima/pub_bok1_000052.html)

**Additional Information to Consider:**

The history of the determining the rate has not considered inflation since it's inception in the mid-1970's. Originally, the charge was \$5.00 and then in 1993 was increased to the \$8.40. However, inflation wasn't considered in the 1993 rate although concerns were raised. Using [www.westegg.com/inflation/](http://www.westegg.com/inflation/) website, the rate would have been \$14.24 instead of \$8.40. The amount of \$14.24 in 2001 would be \$17.26.

If you have any questions regarding the above information provided, please contact me at [cklemery@ticon.net](mailto:cklemery@ticon.net) or at 608-661-6742.

Thank you.